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Rescinding Paragraph 1 of Section 312 of the Faculty Handbook Requiring Final Examinations in All Courses.

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Approved by the Senate:

Not Approved by the Senate:

Approved by the President:

Not Approved by the President:

Rescinding Paragraph 1 of Section 312 of the Faculty Handbook Requiring Final Examinations in All Courses.

Submitted by Robert Costomiris

4/19/2010

Motion:

I move that the Faculty Senate rescind the policy adopted by the Faculty Senate in 1975 that requires final examinations in all classes and replace it with a policy that leaves the decision to give or not to give final exams to the judgment of the faculty.

Rationale:

The evaluation of student performance is the purview of the instructor responsible for the class. While some instructors might find final exams a useful and necessary assessment tool, others might not. For example, writing intensive courses, research and methods courses, and studio courses, to name a few, might well use final projects in place of a final exam, thus making a required final exam a redundant formality. In any case, it is the instructor's job to determine the efficacy of giving a final exam in a particular class. A blanket policy requiring exams in all classes does not take into account this responsibility.

Response:

6/9/2010: A motion entitled “Rescinding Paragraph 1 of Section 312 of the Faculty Handbook Requiring Final Examinations in All Courses” did not go forward. The motion was submitted by Robert Costomiris and said, “I move that the Faculty Senate rescind the policy adopted by the Faculty Senate in 1975 that requires final examinations in all classes and replace it with a policy that leaves the decision to give or not to give final exams to the judgment of the faculty.” Moore said that the Senate Executive Committee decided not to put this motion forward, citing page 57 of the Faculty Handbook Section 312, Paragraph 1: “The only exceptions are courses that the appropriate dean has determined do not fall under the college regulation requiring a final to be given University policy also requires that examinations must be held as scheduled unless authorized by the department or school chair/director and the dean.” If there are reasons why a faculty member might not wish to give a final exam, the exemption as quoted provides the protocol for this not to happen. Also, the SEC noted if finals were left up to the judgment of faculty, it may be, Moore said, “a doorway to widespread abuse. Faculty may require a host of projects, papers, tests, performance, exhibits, and so on, all in the last week of class, which could put students at a distinct disadvantage.” The Senate Executive Committee was unanimous in not putting forward this motion.

Attachment: 312 Final Examinations A policy adopted by the Faculty Senate on April 8, 1975, states, “Final examinations must be given in all courses. The only exceptions are courses that the appropriate dean has determined do not fall under the college regulation requiring a final to be given. A test the final day cannot be substituted for a final exam. Graduating seniors cannot be exempted from finals.”

University policy also requires that examinations must be held as scheduled unless authorized by the department or school chair/director and the dean. The few classes operating on an irregular schedule that do not fit into the above plan will have their examinations scheduled and announced by the instructor.

Policy for Changing a Student’s Final Examination A change in a student’s final examination schedule will be approved only for emergency reasons, such as serious illness (a note from Health Services or family physician is required) or the death of an immediate family member (a letter or phone call from a parent, guardian, or physician is required). Letters and phone calls should be directed to the appropriate faculty member.

Final examination schedules will not normally be changed for any of the following reasons: wedding of the student, relative, or friend; part-time or full-time job or job interview; internship or field study; vacation; graduation of relative or friend;

convenience of travel schedule; or only one final examination remaining at the end of the week. Exceptions to these guidelines can be made, but should be based on a very compelling case.

Using these guidelines, the student may submit a Request to Reschedule a Final Examination form to the instructor, who, with approval of the department chair, has authority to reschedule the final examination to a new time not conflicting with other regularly scheduled examinations or classes if he or she desires. Forms are available in department offices or on the Provost's Office web site at <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/provost/forms.html>.

Policy for Changing a Student's Final Examination If There is a Conflict

A conflict is defined as three exams in a calendar day or two exams at the same time. Conflict periods are scheduled at the stated times in the semester exam schedule, which can be accessed at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar>. (At the main menu, scroll down and click on "Final Exam Schedule.")

To resolve a conflict in which a student has two examinations scheduled for the same period, the instructor of the lower numbered course shall reschedule the exam to another time mutually agreed upon by the instructor and the student or to one of the conflict periods. To resolve a conflict in which a student has three examinations scheduled in one calendar day, the examination scheduled for the middle period shall be rescheduled to another time mutually agreed upon by the instructor and the student or to a conflict period on another day. It is incumbent upon the student to petition his or her professor no later than the last week of classes so that an alternative arrangement can be made